

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

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USIA-06 DHA-02 AID-05 OMB-01 EB-08 XMB-02 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4797

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6954

FOR AF

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CG OVIP (NGUZA KARL I BOND)

SUBJECT: NGUZA'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

REF: KINSHASA 6937

1. IN ADDITION TO EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR US HELP IN PRESERVING ZAIRE'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, NGUZA IS BEING SENT TO WASHINGTON TO EXPLAIN MOBUTU'S IMPENDING REFORMS IN THE AREAS OF (A) POLITICAL DEMOCRATIZATION, (B) ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION, AND (C) HUMAN RIGHTS. WHILE APPARENTLY NOT STIPULATED IN THE LETTER NGUZA WILL BE CARRYING FOR PRESIDENT CARTER, REORGANIZATION OF THE MILITARY IS OF COURSE ANOTHER VITALLY IMPORTANT REFORM NOW UNDERWAY.

2. DEMOCRATIZATION IS EMBODIED IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS WHICH, IF IMPLEMENTED AS NOW PLANNED, WILL GIVE THE POPULACE AT LEAST SOME SAY IN HOW THIS COUNTRY IS GOVERNED. A DETAILED ELECTORAL LAW WAS PUBLISHED LAST WEEK, AND OUR INITIAL REVIEW INDICATES THAT IT IS FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD ALTHOUGH NOT DEVOID OF HITCHES THAT MIGHT SERVE TO FLAGRANTLY INHIBIT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. MOBUTU HAS APPARENTLY INSISTED THAT THERE BE NO SEVERE
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LIMITATIONS ON NUMBERS OF CANDIDATES (SEE KINSHASA 6939), AND NGUZA WILL PROBABLY UNDERSCORE THIS POINT AS EVIDENCE OF MOBUTU'S SINCERITY IN PURSUING DEMOCRATIZATION. THERE HAS BEEN SOME EVIDENCE OF POPULAR ENTHUSIASM FOR ELECTIONS IN THE BELIEF THAT AT A MINIMUM THEY WILL OFFER SOME RELIEF FROM THE ABUSES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SECURITY OFFICIALS. IT IS NOT SURPRISING, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS ALSO A GREAT DEAL OF POPULAR

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CISM, A FEELING OF DEJA VU AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE DESPAIRED AT THE CONTRAST BETWEEN MOBUTU'S PROMISES AND ACTIONS IN THE PAST. WE BELIEVE THERE IS GOOD REASON FOR SUCH SKEPTICISM. THE FACT REMAINS, HOWEVER, THAT BY THIS TIME OUTLINING A VERY SPECIFIC PROGRAM OF POLITICAL REFORM, MOBUTU HAS INEVITABLY CREATED PRESSURES ON HIMSELF TO DELIVER AT LEAST PART OF THE GOODS. HE MUST REALIZE THAT FAILURE TO DO SO COULD HAVE MORE SERIOUS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR HIS OWN RULE THAN HE HAS HERETOFORE HAD TO FACE.

3. NGUZA WILL STRESS DECENTRALIZATION AS KEY TO BETTER MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY. WE AGREE THIS WILL HELP, IF IMPLEMENTED SERIOUSLY, AND IT SHOULD THEREFORE BE ENCOURAGED. IN THIS CONTEXT I HAVE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION TO NGUZA WITH THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE BEING PLAYED BY THE NEW PLANNING DEPARTMENT UNDER MULUMBA, AND BY THE CANDOR AND REASON DISPLAYED BY THE GOZ AT THE RECENT CONSULTATIVE GROUP AND PARIS CLUB MEETINGS. BUT I HAVE ALSO STRESSED TO NGUZA THE IMPORTANCE WE CONTINUE TO PLACE ON THE GOZ'S ADHERING FAITHFULLY TO THE IMF STABILIZATION PROGRAM, AND THE FACT THAT US ATTITUDES TOWARD ASSISTING ZAIRE WILL INEVITABLY BE INFLUENCED BY EVIDENCE-- OR LACK OF IT -- OF SUCH ADHERENCE. I BELIEVE THESE POINTS SHOULD BE REPEATED TO NGUZA IN WASHINGTON. I HAVE ALSO BRIEFED HIM ON SOME OF OUR CURRENT PROBLEMS, SUCH AS EXIM ARREARAGES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO CONTINUATION OF THE INGA-SHABA LINE AND THE NEED TO MOVE AHEAD MORE EXPEDITIOUSLY WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR PL-480 AND CIP LOAN PROGRAMS. NGUZA IS NO ECONOMIST AND SHIES AWAY FROM GETTING INVOLVED IN THE OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THESE PROBLEMS (EVEN MORE SO NOW THAT HE NO LONGER WEARS THE HAT OF VICE PRESIDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MATTERS). BUT HE FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ECONOMIC REFORM AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO OUR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND I BELIEVE HE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO CONVEY TO MOBUTU FAIRLY ACCURATELY WASHINGTON'S VIEWS.

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CONVEY TO MOBUTU FAIRLY ACCURATELY WASHINGTON'S VIEWS.

4. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, MOBUTU HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT WHAT HE VIEWS AS OUR ATTEMPT TO APPLY RIGID AND SOMETIMES UNREALISTIC STANDARDS TO ALL COUNTRIES, FRIENDS AND ADVERSARIES ALIKE. NOR DOES HE BELIEVE THAT ZAIRE, GIVEN ALL THE DIFFICULTIES OF GOVERNING A COUNTRY LIKE THIS, DESERVES THE SHARP CRITICISM IT HAS RECEIVED, PARTICULARLY FROM THE US MEDIA AND CONGRESS. AT THE SAME TIME, MOBUTU IS ACUTELY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THIS ISSUE AND, OF COURSE, THIS IS WHY HE HAS MADE IT ONE OF THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF NGUZA'S MISSION. I EXPECT NGUZA WILL BASICALLY DEFEND ZAIRE'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES (E.G., THREATS TO ZAIRE'S SECURITY, SUCH AS THE SHABA INVASION) BUT POINT TO MOBUTU'S JULY 1 SPEECH AS EVIDENCE OF

DETERMINATION TO DO BETTER. (SEE KINSHASA 6137 FOR MISSION'S MOST RECENT ASSESSMENT.)

5. THE ONE SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS CASE I HAVE RAISED WITH MOBUTU AND SEVERAL TIMES WITH NGUZA IS THAT OF LUYEYE, SENIOR AID LOCAL EMPLOYEE WHO HAS BEEN DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGES SINCE LATE MARCH FOR WHAT APPEAR TO BE ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL REASONS. I HAVE MADE THE POINT TO NGUZA THAT GOZ ACTION TO RESOLVE LUYEY'S CASE WOULD CERTAINLY BE APPROPRIATE BEFORE NGUZA WENT TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS, INTER ALIA, HUMAN RIGHTS. NGUZA GETS THE POINT, HAS TWICE PASSED IT ON TO MOBUTU IN RECENT DAYS, AND WE ARE NOW WAITING TO SEE IF ANY ACTION RESULTS. IF THERE IS NONE, I BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD RAISE IT WITH NGUZA DURING THE DISCUSSIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ZAIRE, FOCUSING ON OUR CONTINUING
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INTEREST
IN THE WELFARE OF THIS USG EMPLOYEE AND OUR EXPECTATION THAT HIS CASE WILL BE HANDLED EXPEDITIOUSLY AND FAIRLY.
CUTLER

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